

REMARKS

New claims 23 and 24 include the limitation that the filtration portion of the filter element consists only of two filtration materials, basis being found on line 11 of page 2.

In the outstanding office action, the examiner has recognized that the rejections made previously are unwarranted but has now rejected claims 1-4, 6-11 and 13-22 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by either of newly cited prior art, Knight et al or Seibert et al.

In contention, it is first pointed out that Knight does not disclose or suggest the provision of a filter of nonwoven fabric as required by claim 1 (last paragraph); claim 8 (penultimate paragraph); and claims 17 and 18 (last paragraphs). The porous plastic sock or sheath, which the tubular boro-silicate glass micro-fiber filter (7) is within, is simply a container to hold the micro-fiber filter (7) while permitting gas to escape therethrough and is not a non- woven fabric. The other filter element 9 is made of sintered bronze or porous plastic material, neither of which can be properly considered to be a non-woven fabric.

Furthermore, the filter element 9 is spaced apart from the micro-fiber filter (7),

not in "intimate contact therewith" as required by either of claims 1 and 8 (lines 20); claim 17 (line 21); and, claim 18 (line 20).

The (first) filter element 9 has larger pores than the (second) micro-fiber filter whereas claims 17 and 18 emphasise that the pores of the first filter material should be smaller than the pores of the second filter material. The pores of the porous plastic sock or sheath may be expected to be smaller than the pores of the micro-fiber filter through which the gas passes through first, contrary to the limitation emphasised in claims 17 and 18.

In summary, in view of the several claim limitations not disclosed by Knight et al, the rejection of anticipation by the reference is inappropriate.

In contention of the rejection of all claims in view of Siebert et al, it is pointed out that, as shown in Figure 3, the (first) coalesce filter CO comprises a middle layer of non-woven epoxy-bonded fibrous mat (0.012 inch fiber diameter) sandwiched between an innermost layer of cellulose paper (0.002 inch thick) and an outer sheath of epoxy -bonded fibrous mat (0.020 inch thick).

Thus, the epoxy-bonded glass fiber mat is not in intimate contact with the stripper whereas the claims require glass paper filter material in intimate contact with the stripper required by the claims.

Furthermore, the Seibert filter requires at least 4 layers of material. In contrast the claimed filter requires only two filtration material, respectively, of glass paper and non-woven fabric, which is an advantageously simple and inherently economic construction, which limitation is expressed positively in new claims 23 and 24.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the examiner's rejection is inappropriate and that the claims define patentable subject matter.

Favorable reconsideration of the application is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

/Robert W.J. Usher/

Robert W. J Usher (Reg30923)

Customer no 004518

212 633 1076